

Providence had been kind to him. However, it is safer to be content with the assumption that Mary, partially at any rate, accepted the standard of morality of her own generation than to attribute to her an almost superhuman patience and devotion. In his Advice to a Daughter, Halifax enunciates the rule :

You are to consider, you live in a time which hath rendered some kind of frailties so habitual that they lay claim to large grains of allowance. . . . Remember, that next to the danger of committing the fault yourself, the greatest is that of seeing it in your husband. Do not seem to look or hear that way ; if he is a man of sense he will reclaim himself; the folly of it is of itself sufficient to cure him. If he is not so, he will be provoked, but not reformed. . . . Be assured that in these cases your discretion and silence will be the most prevailing reproof.

Many examples might be cited to show that Halifax correctly interpreted the views then prevalent: Henrietta Maria's partiality for Henry Jermyn, even when he had seduced one of her maids of honour, may be explained on the ground that she thought it sufficient to be chaste herself and did not exact chastity from her friends ; Charles II's retention of his wife's love in spite of his many sins ; William III's anger at his friend Zulestein for marrying Jane Wroth after he had betrayed her ; Mary's acceptance of her husband's lapses as an unavoidable evil. After all,

she had the first, if not the sole, place in his affections.

There is abundant proof that William was really very fond of Mary and esteemed her highly. For weeks after her death his grief incapacitated him for all business. He commemorated the day of her death with mournful solemnity : he wore on his breast a lock of her hair for his remaining days.